

## MISCELLANEOUS.

*A Matter of Nomenclature.* By EDGAR R. WAITE.

IN a recent paper\* I proposed the generic name *Prosoplismus* for *Histioplerus recurvirostris*, Richardson. Since the publication of this paper I have purchased some parts of Steindachner and Döderlein's "Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Fische Japan's"†.

In this work I find the name *Pentaceropsis* applied to *H. recurvirostris* and *H. labiosus*, Günther; it therefore has precedence of my name. I cannot admit an alliance of these two species; the latter should either re-enter *Histioplerus* or be made the type of a new genus, with *H. Furnelli*, Waite, as an associate, such being a name to replace *Richardsonia*, Castelnau (preoccupied).

In the absence of the actual work on the fishes of Japan, my action was unavoidable, for the genus *Pentaceropsis* was omitted from the 'Zoological Record,' though *Histioplerus*, under which it occurs, was duly noted (Zool. Rec. 1883, p. 19). It is naturally also omitted from the new 'Index Zoologicus.' This omission is responsible not only for my name *Prosoplismus*, but also for the re-application (in 1889) of *Pentaceropsis* by Sladen to a genus of Echinodermata, which cannot, of course, be maintained.

In drawing attention to the omission from the 'Zoological Record' I do not desire to attach blame to the Recorders: such is really merited by the authors—first, for naming a genus in what is practically a footnote, without distinctive heading; and, second, for introducing into a work on Japanese fishes the description of an Australian species. These two points are covered by the later recommendations proposed in the second report of the British Association Committee on Zoological Bibliography and Publication (1897). Art. 6 reads:—"That new names should not be proposed in irrelevant footnotes or anonymous paragraphs" (p. 361). *Pentaceropsis* occurs as a footnote, and is irrelevant to the title and scope of the work.

*Pentaceropsis* naturally suggests *Pentaceros*, which also occurs (p. 8) in the work cited. This name has been considered as applicable to fishes, because its earliest use, by Linck in Echinodermata (1733), is pre-Linnean. It did not appear in ichthyological literature until 1829 (Cuvier and Valenciennes), whereas Schülze used it in 1760, and thus established the name for the Asteroidea. A statement of the case will be found in Sladen's Report on the Asteroidea‡. I am not aware that any name has yet been proposed to replace *Pentaceros* in ichthyology.

Australian Museum, Sydney,  
May 26, 1903.

\* Rec. Austr. Mus. v. 1903, p. 58, pl. vi.

† Denk. Akad. Wien, xlviii. 1883, p. 13 (footnote), pl. vi.

‡ 'Challenger' Report, xxx. 1889, p. 343.